



FEMA

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Contact:

Indiana DHS Pam Bright 317-232-6632
FEMA Gene Romano 317-232-5276
SBA Michael Lampton 404-347-3771

DISASTER NEWS

DISASTER RECOVERY CENTERS OPEN FRIDAY TO ASSIST FLOOD VICTIMS

INDIANAPOLIS — To help meet the ongoing needs of those who sustained damage from flooding in Lake County, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) will open Disaster Recovery Centers on Friday, Oct. 13. The centers provide a single location where people may talk face-to-face with state and federal recovery specialists.

There are two easy ways to begin the application process **before** visiting a Disaster Recovery Center. Residents may call FEMA's toll-free number, **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 1-800-462-7585** for the hearing and speech impaired. Both numbers are available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. (local time) seven days a week until further notice. Multilingual operators are available to answer calls. Residents with Internet access can register on the agency's Web site at www.fema.gov where valuable recovery information also is available.

Representatives from local, state and federal agencies will staff the joint centers, operated by FEMA and the IDHS. The following centers will be open from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 13 and, thereafter, they will be open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily until further notice. These are temporary offices and the information and services are available at no cost.

East Chicago: Riley Park
1005 East Chicago Avenue

Highland: Lincoln Center
2450 Lincoln Street

Gary: Genesis Convention Center
One Genesis Center Plaza (U.S. Hwy 20 & SR 53)

"Disaster Recovery Centers serve as one-stop locations for individuals who have questions regarding the state and federal disaster recovery process," said Eric Dietz, state coordinating officer and executive director of IDHS. "Residents may visit the center closest to their home or work."

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Information provided at these centers is not only useful to those who suffered damages from September's storms. Any area residents can visit a center and find out what they can do to reduce future damages from severe storms and flooding.

"At this time in the recovery process, people are beginning to think about putting their lives back together," said Larry Sommers, FEMA's federal coordinating officer. "Right now people want information about the status of their applications for assistance or help filling out their disaster loan application."

Recovery specialists at the centers can provide information to disaster victims about:

- The status of the application they have already made by phone or online;
- Referrals for temporary rental assistance resources;
- Assistance completing U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) low-interest disaster loan applications for homeowners, renters, business owners and non-profit organizations;
- Cost-effective measures to reduce the impact of future flooding or disaster losses;
- Information and detailed plans on how to construct a safe room;
- Federal disaster tax assistance;
- Information about the Individuals and Households Program, which includes Housing and Other Needs Assistance;
- Additional referral information, handouts and contact numbers for other assistance.

Individuals who are unable to visit the centers and have questions about disaster assistance, rebuilding or preventive measures to avoid future damages are urged to call the same toll-free numbers listed above and select the option for "General Information" or go online to www.fema.gov.

FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

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